

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An expendable supplies providing method for providing a client user who prints advertisement information with expendable supplies used in print processing, comprising:
 - an advertisement management step for managing advertisement information;
 - a distribution step for generating distribution information based on said advertisement information to distribute said distribution information in order to print the same;
 - an update step for updating a print point of the client user who prints said advertisement information in response to print output of said distribution information being performed in print apparatus of the client user; and
 - a determination step for determining whether or not expendable supplies should be provided for the client user according to said print point.
2. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - an advertisement receiving step for receiving said advertisement information from an advertisement company server and advertisement attributes information indicating attributes of said advertisement information via the Internet, wherein

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said management step manages said advertisement
attribute information associating said advertisement
attribute information with.

5 3. An expendable supplies providing method
according to claim 1, further comprising:

an obtaining step for obtaining identification
information for identifying a type of a print apparatus
of each client user; and

10 a selection step for selecting a printer driver
corresponding to a print apparatus which should print
said distribution information based on said
identification information.

15 4. An expendable supplies providing method
according to claim 1, further comprising:

an instruction receiving step for receiving an
instruction to deliver expendable supplies that should
be provided for said client user, wherein

20 said determination step compares an accumulated
print point of the client user with a consumption point
added by providing said expendable supplies for which
an instruction to provide is received, and determines
that said expendable supplies instructed by the client
25 user be provided if said consumption point does not
exceed said print point.

5. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, further comprising:

an order receiving step for receiving order such that said expendable supplies for which instruction to provide is received in said instruction receiving step are provided for the client user, wherein

said update step updates a print point of said client user in response to receipt of an order of said expendable supplies.

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6. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, further comprising:

a profile management step for managing profile data of a plurality of client users using a database;

15 a condition receiving step for receiving selection conditions for selecting specific client users to whom said advertisement information should be distributed;

a selection step for selecting the specific client users to whom said advertisement information should be 20 distributed based on said received selection conditions and said managed profile data, wherein

said distribution step distributes said distribution information based on said advertisement information to the selected specific client users.

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7. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, further comprising:

a conditions management step for managing contents selection conditions for selecting distribution contents obtained from specific client users in advance; and

5 a collection step for collecting contents information that should be distributed to the specific client users out of a plurality of pieces of contents information obtained from a plurality of sites via the Internet based on said managed selection conditions,

10 wherein

 said distribution step generates said distribution information based on said collected contents information and said advertisement information, and distributes said distribution information in order to
15 print by a print apparatus of the client user.

8. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, wherein

the expendable supplies providing method is a
20 method of providing expendable supplies in a system for distributing print information to a client user, who has a set-top box for transferring print information to be received to a print apparatus to be connected, via a cable network of a digital broadcast system.

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9. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 8, wherein

a URL of a portal site server for receiving an order of expendable supplies is downloaded from a cable head end server of the digital broadcast system to said set-top box of the client server in advance.

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10. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 8, wherein

10 said portal site server prepares a user ID for providing a client user who is allowed to log in for the first time with an expendable supplies service, writes cookie information in a browser of a set-top box, and authenticates the client user referring to said cookie information at the time of the next login.

15 11. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 1, wherein

10 said expendable supplies include a recording color material and a recording medium.

20 12. A management apparatus for providing a client user who prints advertisement information with expendable supplies used in print processing, comprising:

25 advertisement managing means for managing advertisement information;

distributing means for generating distribution information based on said advertisement information to

distribute said distribution information in order to print the same;

5 updating means for updating a print point of the client user who prints said advertisement information in response to print output of said distribution information being performed by print apparatus of the client user; and

10 determining means for determining whether or not expendable supplies should be provided for the client user according to said print point.

13. A control program to be executed in a management apparatus for providing a client user who prints advertisement information with expendable supplies used in print processing, said program comprising:

an advertisement management step for managing advertisement information;

20 a distribution step for generating distribution information based on said advertisement information to distribute said distribution information in order to print the same;

25 an update step for updating a print point of the client user who prints said advertisement information in response to print output of said distribution information being performed by print apparatus of the client user; and

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a determination step for determining whether or not expendable supplies should be provided for the client user according to said print point.

5 14. A computer-readable storage medium storing a control program to be executed in a management apparatus for providing a client user who prints advertisement information with expendable supplies used in print processing, wherein

10 said control program comprising:
 an advertisement management step for managing advertisement information;

15 a distribution step for generating distribution information based on said advertisement information to distribute said distribution information in order to print the same;

20 an update step for updating a print point of the client user who prints said advertisement information in response to print output of said distribution information being performed by print apparatus of the client user; and

25 a determination step for determining whether or not expendable supplies should be provided for the client user according to said print point.

15. An expendable supplies providing method for generating expendable supplies provision information

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with which expendable supplies to be distributed to a client user are designated, comprising;

an identification step for identifying a client user whose access is received via the Internet;

5 an obtaining step for obtaining a print point, which corresponds to said identified client user, accumulated in response to a print output of distribution information based on advertisement information;

10 a step for reading an expendable supplies list indicating a plurality of kinds of expendable supplies and an consumption point required for providing each item of expendable supplies to generate in the HTML format expendable supplies provision information

15 including said expendable supplies list and said obtained print point; and

a transmission step for transmitting said generated expendable item provision information to the client user via the Internet.

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16. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 15, further comprising:

an instruction receiving step for receiving an instruction to deliver expendable supplies that should be provided for said client user via the Internet based 25 on said expendable supplies provision information.

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17. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 16, further comprising:

a determination step for determining whether or not expendable supplies are provided to the client user
5 according to said print point.

18. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 17, wherein

said determination step compares an accumulated
10 print point of the client user and a consumption point consumed by providing said expendable supplies for which an instruction to provide is received, and determines that said expendable supplies instructed by the client user be provided if said consumption point
15 does not exceed said print point.

19. An expendable supplies providing method according to claim 16, further comprising:

an order receiving step for receiving order such
20 that said expendable supplies for which instruction to provide is received in said instruction receiving step are provided for the client user; and

an update step for updating a print point of the client user in response to receipt of an order of said
25 expendable supplies.

20. An expendable supplies providing method

according to claim 15, wherein

the expendable supplies providing method is a
method of providing expendable supplies in a system for
distributing print information to a client user, who
5 has a set-top box for transferring print information to
be received to a print apparatus to be connected, via a
cable network of a digital broadcast system.

21. An expendable supplies providing method
10 according to claim 20, wherein

a URL of a portal site server for receiving an
order of expendable supplies is downloaded from a cable
head end server of a digital broadcast system to said
set-top box of the client server in advance.

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22. An expendable supplies providing method
according to claim 20, wherein

said portal site server prepares a user ID for
providing a client user who is allowed to log in for
20 the first time with an expendable supplies service,
writes cookie information in a browser of a set-top box
of the client user, and authenticates the client user
referring to said cookie information at the time of the
next login.

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23. An expendable supplies providing method
according to claim 15, wherein

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said expendable supplies include a recording color material and a recording medium.

24. An expendable supplies providing apparatus
5 for generating expendable supplies provision information with which expendable supplies to be distributed to a client user are designated, comprising;

10 identifying means for identifying a client user whose access is received via Internet;

obtaining means for obtaining a print point, which corresponds to said identified client user, accumulated in response to a print output of distribution information based on advertisement information;

15 means for reading an expendable supplies list indicating a plurality of kinds of expendable supplies and an consumption point required for providing each item of expendable supplies to generate in an HTML format expendable supplies provision information
20 including said expendable supplies list and said obtained print point; and

transmitting means for transmitting said generated expendable item provision information to the client user via Internet.

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25. A control program to be executed in an expendable supplies providing apparatus for generating

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expendable supplies provision information with which
expendable supplies to be distributed to a client user
are designated, said program comprising;

an identification step for identifying a client
5 user whose access is received via Internet;

an obtaining step for obtaining a print point,
which corresponds to said identified client user,
accumulated in response to a print output of
distribution information based on advertisement
10 information;

a step for reading an expendable supplies list
indicating a plurality of kinds of expendable supplies
and an consumption point required for providing each
item of expendable supplies to generate in an HTML
15 format expendable supplies provision information
including said expendable supplies list and said
obtained print point; and

20 a transmission step for transmitting said
generated expendable item provision information to the
client user via the Internet.

26. A computer-readable storage medium storing a
control program to be executed in an expendable
supplies providing apparatus for generating expendable
supplies provision information with which expendable
25 supplies to be distributed to a client user are
supplies to be distributed to a client user are
designated, wherein

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said control program comprising;

 an identification step for identifying a client user whose access is received via Internet;

 an obtaining step for obtaining a print point,

5 which corresponds to said identified client user, accumulated in response to a print output of distribution information based on advertisement information;

 a step for reading an expendable supplies list

10 indicating a plurality of kinds of expendable supplies and an consumption point required for providing each item of expendable supplies to generate in an HTML format expendable supplies provision information including said expendable supplies list and said

15 obtained print point; and

 a transmission step for transmitting said generated expendable item provision information to the client user via the Internet.

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